

Photos and Review from the 2015 Glen Eden Playhouse Theatre production.



[Cats of Ponsonby](#)

Cats of Ponsonby
Reviewed by Joan Reekie

If there is one thing that is almost certain to make people happy it is watching young people having fun on stage. Gary Daverne's Cats of Ponsonby recently at the Playhouse Theatre in Glen Eden was such an occasion.

Mr Daverne composed the music for Cats of Ponsonby to words and story by Ray Prowse a number of years ago as a vehicle for school choirs, and has now revamped the show for a new generation. Together with Gary's cousin Christine Daverne who directed, and choreographers James Grant and Jordan Wichman, they have produced a fun musical ably supported by an enthusiastic cast aged from 7 to 16 years, who embraced their feline roles with gusto.

At the beginning of Act One the curtain rose to reveal the various gangs of stray cats (the Alley Cats, Media Mob, Thugs, House Cats and Spice Cats) hungrily waiting outside a restaurant in the faint hope of receiving a meal. Alas, only the well-fed Burmese house cats are invited inside, leaving the Alley Cats to take the risky step of kidnapping a Burmese kitten in order to coerce her sisters into stealing food for them. The Media Mob sniff out a news story and the whole thing escalates into a major cat fight. All is resolved in the end however except that the cats are still hungry.

I must say I was very impressed with the set designed by Stan Henshaw - an alley situated outside the back door of a Ponsonby restaurant, with a large crescent moon lighting the early evening sky and the Sky Tower's familiar silhouette dominating a distant skyline. Very well done indeed. The soloists all gave confident performances, the chorus numbers were strong, and the tap dancing segments were particularly enjoyable. The costuming was also very good, turning the stage into a kaleidoscope of colour.

During the interval the Media Mob cats came into the auditorium to ask questions of the audience regarding the supposed kidnapping, a unique experience for those who were not expecting it.

I am so pleased that all these talented young cast members were given the opportunity to perform in such a delightful show and certainly look forward to Gary and Christine Daverne's next presentation at the Playhouse Theatre.

- Joan Reekie